

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231**

Inventor: **Shyama Mukherjee**

Serial No: **Div. of 09/768439**

Filed: **January 31, 2001**

For: **Viscous Protective Overlayers
For Planarization**

Examiner:

Art Unit:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Mail Stop Patent Application
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

Please enter the following preliminary amendment:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel all allowed claims (1-6) and add the following claims addressing subject matter in application serial number 09/768439:

7. (Cancel)
8. (Original) A precursor for an integrated circuit comprising:
 - an insulating dielectric layer; and,
 - a barrier layer; and,
 - a conductor; and,
 - a protecting fluid; and,
 - an etching fluid whereby the viscosity of the protecting fluid exceeds the viscosity of the etching fluid.

9. (Original) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the barrier layer is tantalum/tantalum nitride.
10. (Original) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the conductor is copper.
11. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the protecting fluid is spun on to at least part of the conductor.
12. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the protecting fluid is saturated with passivating metal ions.
13. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the protecting fluid is saturated with copper ions.
14. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the protecting fluid comprises quinolines or benzotriazol.
15. (Added) The precursor of one of claims 12 or 13, wherein the protecting fluid further comprises quinolines or benzotriazol.
16. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the protecting fluid is introduced on to the conductor followed by the introduction of the etchant fluid.
17. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the protecting fluid and the etchant fluid are blended to form a viscous fluid before being applied to the conductor.
18. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the etchant fluid comprises nitric acid, phosphoric acid, sulfuric acid acetic acid, hydrogen peroxide or a combination thereof.
19. (Added) The precursor of claim 8, wherein the nitric acid is present in solution from about 1% by volume to about 20% by volume.
20. (Added) An interconnection structure formed using the precursor of claim 8.